

Rhoads, Steven E., **THE ECONOMIST'S VIEW OF THE WORLD: Government, Markets, & Public Policy**, NY, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985. 212 p., \$12.95 (paper).

Sorry I didn't get to this one earlier, but I see it's been reprinted at least twice since its first appearance in 1985. The author, a political scientist at the University of Virginia, takes reasoned issue with some of the strict market orientation of Gordon Tullock and James Buchanan, while clearly explaining key economic concepts such as benefit/cost (he gets it right) and opportunity cost.

The author describes himself as someone "who believes that some knowledge of contemporary microeconomics is a prerequisite for intelligent citizenship," and laments its apparent absence in spokesmen for various interests, including public citizen advocates and members of Congress, business, and labor. I would have to agree that "our public policy is the worse for that failure," even where it is merely a rationale for decisions reached on other grounds. Aaron Wildavsky is among the admirers of the work, and I have yet to find myself in disagreement with that esteemed Berkeley Professor of Political Science and Public Policy.

Steuer, James A., **THE END OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION: Problems of the Profession in the Post-Progressive Era**, Dobbs Ferry, NY, Transnational Publishers, Inc., 1988. 182 p. \$37.50 (cloth).

This work addresses the question "What can be done to make public administration legitimate?" The author sets forth a three-part analysis and work program on a usable concept, appropriate role models, and institutional support.

I'm not sure I'm in favor of any further moves toward credentialization, but I would agree that more vital professional support for high standards of ethics and performance might help reduce the mindless strictures that are used as a substitute to protect nonsupervisory and middle-management employees and the general public.

Davies, J. Clarence, Vincent T. Covello, and Frederick W. Allen, eds., **RISK COMMUNICATION**, DC, The Conservation Foundation, 1987. 105 p., \$15.00 (paper).

The point of this piece is that even when they're trying to be understood, people don't always make themselves clear when talking or writing about risk. This is a report stemming from a 1986 conference on the problem, sponsored by government, industry, and the nonprofit sector. Some 500 persons attended. Since I missed it, and suspect that you did, too, the place to start might be the appendix. It is a revised version of the background paper for the conference.

The paper breaks the communication process into four batches of problems: the information to be communicated, the communicator, the channel of communication, and the recipient. It then suggests that the primary purpose of the message might also be a fruitful perspective: to educate, to guide action, to alert, or to engage in joint problemsolving. Suggestions for communicators follow brief discussions of each of these four categories (pp. 117-27), and represent the "must read" section.

Sivaramakrishnan, K. C., and Leslie Green, **METROPOLITAN MANAGEMENT: The Asian Experience**, NY, Oxford Univ. Press for the World Bank Economic Development Institute, 1986. 262 p., \$29.95 (hard cover).

A growing proportion of large (over 5 million population) urban aggregations are to be found in what is termed the developing world, and the World Bank and its affiliates find themselves moving from simply analyzing and underwriting work on infrastructure projects (roads, water supplies, and the like) to broader questions of urban planning and management.

This book recapitulates the planning and development experience of eight Asian cities, from Karachi to Manila. Each of the cities is profiled, including sections on governmental structure, fiscal and other problems, responses, and pending issues.

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